

A  
DECLARATION  
Concerning the newly invented  
Art of  
DOUBLE WRITING.

Wherein are expressed the reasons of the  
Authors proceedings in procuring a Privilege for  
the same: As also of the Time, Manner, and  
Price, of the discovery of the said  
Art, and of the Instruments  
belonging thereunto.

For the satisfaction of all that desire to  
be partakers of the great benefit of the same,  
before they adventure any thing towards  
the reward thereof.

*Whereunto is annexed a copie of an Ordinance of both Houses of Parliament, approving the feasibility and great use of the said invention, and allowing a Privilege to the Inventor, for the sole benefit thereof for 14 years, upon the penalty of one hundred pounds.*



L O N D O N,  
Printed by R. L. for R. W. at the Star under Saint  
Peters Church in Cornhill, 1648.





A brieſe DECLARATION  
 concerning  
 DOUBLE WRITING,  
 by the Inventor thereof,  
*Chiefly to prevent miſunderſtanding of his  
 proceedings in the diſcovery of  
 the ſame.*



Shal not enlarge upon the praiſes of double writing, for every man beſt knoweth himſelfe what uſe he can make of it, leaſt I thereby ſeem to praiſe my ſelfe, arrogating indeed what I doe not deſerve. For to ſpeak truth, the manifold, univerſall, and perpetuall uſes of it to the Common-wealth, did not at firſt put me upon the deſigne, but the fair hint of the poſſibility of ſuch a thing, which God unexpectedly put into my minde, co-operating with an affection that I have to doe ſomewhat new and uſefull (though by never ſo ſlight means) and withall hopes to mend mine own fortunes by benefiting all, rather then prejudicing any, encouraged me to take pains (although by the ſimplicity of the Inſtruments it doth not appear) about the invention. On the

contrary, I confesse, that I rather deserve to be blamed of dulnesse, that it hath cost me any pains at all, to contrive so simple and plain things as my Instruments are, and I hope when it shall be discovered to better heads to be soon made ashamed by their improvements, that I have done no more unto them. So that according to the nature of the thing, I have more reason to expect profit then praise for my reward, and perhaps some men have been too apt to believe me herein, thinking that my procuring a Patent, and deferring the discovery doe argue an ambition in me, not only of vast but unreasonable desires.

But I hope to make such men understand, that neither by procuring the Patent, retarding the discovery, the price which I have set on it, nor by any other proceeding, I have expressed my desires to be unreasonable, no more then the satisfaction of them is like to be vast.

For first, I had scarce any other course to take then to procure a Patent of Priviledge according to the Laws: For should I have given it away for nothing? the thing (as many others are) would have been condemned as of no use, because of no price, and I my self should have been as much jeer'd for my prodigality, as thanked for my industry.

Should I have petitioned the State for a reward, that course would have disparaged the businesse, for if it be of the use pretended, it is able to reward it selfe, and why should one petition to give away a benefit? But besides all this, their engagements past, and imminent use of money (as I was informed) would have made my request unseasonable.

Should I have addressed my selfe to any one Company

pany in the City, it is to be feared that after much sollicitation, I should have been at last answered, That since it concerned all Companies as much as any one, unless all would joyn, one would do nothing, and to make all of them so to joyn, was a work beyond my power and patience.

As for particular men, I found them generally to professe a willingnesse to contribute, but many were unwilling that others should have the same benefit with them for nothing: besides, it was impossible for me to bring any considerable number of them together,

I propounded to some freinds, to move the State to lay an additionall tax upon writing paper, though never so small, and to employ the same towards the advancement of Arts, somewhat (if they thought fit) according to my printed draught thereof, allowing me in particular some small part of those profits, not only as a reward of mine invention, but as an engagement to labour in the designe of promoting Arts. But this proposition (being thought too subject to debates in the Houses, and to crosse too much the nature of the times, when men complain enough already of impositions) was waved, although, could it have been pursued, it had been the most proper and just of all other. For certainly, according to the use and expence of paper, the use of this invention might best be measured, and consequently rewarded, and if men paid a farthing extraordinary in two of three quires of paper, for the accommodation of such an Art, and for the carrying on of publike, profitable, and honourable designs, I conceive it had been no crying oppression, so that all these  
severall.

severall projections being full of impediments, I was forced upon this more common and legall way of procuring a Patent of priviledge for 14 years.

The reasons why I yet defer the publication of the secret, having obtained a grant from the State of *England*, are: 1 To obtain Priviledges also from some other Neighbouring States.

1 Because it is unjust that the burthen of rewarding an universall good should lie upon the place only where it was brought forth.

2 To make the contributions of each particular man lesse considerable.

3 That I might be relieved from other places in case the troubles should renew in *England* (which God avert) so as to break my designe here.

4 That I might improve this blessing and Talent of God to the best advantage possible, thereby to effect other things tending to his glory, and the good of the world: being still resolved not to fail of my expectations (that is to say) never to account upon any thing but what I shall from time to time see.

Secondly, Because I had some other contrivances standing upon the same principles with this, which upon the discovery of this would have been discovered also.

Lastly, Because I would take away all occasions which men might have to incur the danger of the penalty allowed by the Parliament by hindring them so to doe, at least untill I could so provide for my selfe, as that I need not to be extremly rigorous against any, but such as shall contumeliously affront the Authority of my grant.

And this later consideration (namely the avoyding  
of

of all suits and vexations from the which clamour and trouble must necessarily reflect upon my selfe) is one of the grounds why I accept of this small summe of five shillings present payment, and another is, because it may happen (though against my wishes and interest) that the discovery may not be made untill about 11 moneths hence, although, if any reasonable number shall appear, it may be done within lesse then three. For it can be no disadvantage to me to make all convenient haste since after discovery I am no longer obliged to accept the small rate propounded. A third reason for the same is to prevent all grudgings suspicion of injury, picking needleffe quarrels, and prosecuting frivolous faults against the invention it selfe (whereunto the exacting of a full (though just) price may move captious spirits, specially at first, til they have found the goodnes of their bargain) for in as much as it is impossible to foretell or divine what each man will approve of or dislike, seeing by daily experience, that all things (even the best) are diversly received and accepted by diverse men, so that there are never or rarely any which all men doe like in all points, and that in the highest degree, wee may not expect such perfections in this businesse. Onely we presume that those who shall be most froward and exceptions against the invention, and shall have least need of it, cannot thinke five shillings ill bestowed on so rare an attempt. For if a man can in a small time learn for to write as fast and as fair by this double, as by the usuall way, all men allow that it may in the 14 years (which is the tearm of my priviledge) save some hundreds of pounds to some men, and exceedingly more then five shillings to any man. Now as to the

the matter of fastnesse and dispatch, I say, that about 20 persons of such credit, worth, and judgement (most of them strangers to me) have so impartially attested how I have written by the help of this art, double to other swift and expedite writers, that the great Councell of this Kingdom have acquiesced in their Certificates. As for the fairnesse, many hundreds in this City and elsewhere have seen the fairnesse of my writings made by it, in comparision with what I can do otherwise, and all men (*nemine contradicente*) rest satisfied in its sufficiencie.

Having thus cleered these two points by experiment to the senses, it remaineth to consider whether any man may practice this Art according to my proposalls, to which, all that I can possibly say is, that I did it my selfe at the very first sight and handling of the Instrument, having never the reputation of more then an ordinary dexterity of hand, common to all men that are familiar with the pen; so that if a man should not doe according to my said propositions, I should more wonder then I can now disside. And I believe that I might have set a longer time for the learning of this Art, but should I have done it, men may take just distaste at me, for undervaluing their abilities so far, as not to thinke them able to attain in an houres serious endeavour, what I my selfe did at the first assay. But suppose, that some men could not doe according to these propositions, certainly these are most likely to fail, who are least used and able to write, and consequently such as have least need of the invention.

Suppose none could do it within the time allotted, but should either write not so fair, or not so fast, or neither so



so fair nor so fast. First, though not so fair, the inconvenience is no more essentiall to a mans businesse, then to write a few dayes longer with a bad pen, or other unfit tools. Secondly, though not so fast, nay, but with halfe the promised advantage, still I say that in much writing the advantage would be great. Lastly, though neither so fast nor so fair, I affirm, that yet the defects cannot be so great as to weigh down the commodities, even then, besides that those defects may be made up with a little longer times practice. Suppose, again, that a very long time were requisite to reduce the hand to the same quicknesse and fastnesse in this as in the common way, yet children might be conveniently brought up to it, and others may better swallow this difficulty then that of Short writing and the like.

Lastly, suppose that it was for ever impossible. Neverthelessse it cannot be supposed but that a man who can write otherwise very fair, may write by this Instrument as fair as is needfull to any businesse whatsoever. And if there be any writing which requireth a greater beauty then the Instrument is able to afford, yet they are very few, and perhaps such as need no copying at all, now to write such things by the common way, will be neither a great nor frequent labour, as for swiftnesse it can never come behinde the ordinary way, especially if a little of the fairnesse be dispenced withall, and very little otherwise.

Now if all these conceits were any more then meer suppositions, yet there will be still found conveniences in this Art above what are in the common way, to repair its inconveniences, namely, the likenesse of the copies, whereby the labour of examination (no small matter in many cases) is saved; and the danger of falsification either prevented or discovered. Besides many impediments may be lestned by the alteration of many indifferent circumstances, about writing-books and paper now usuall, as to write in books that open well and easily,

rather in those whose backs are stubborn and stiff bound; to write in folio rather than in smaller folds, in single paper rather than in much doubled and boysterous, with all which particulars this Art will sufficiently consist to practisers not monstrously unhandy.

Lastly, other ingenious men may, and certainly will soon mend any thing that shall be found amisse, as to any mans particular use, for mine own part I shall never be wanting thereunto, and could at present alter the instrument in severall particulars, did I not fear that in making them more fit for one mans use, they would be lesse fit for anothers; But if any man shall considerately better the businesse, I shall be willing to gratifie him proportionably, to what I my selfe shall gain by it, and that by such a reasonable way as I shall hereafter more particularly propound.

We come to explain our selves in some other Circumstances, first, concerning the manner of discovering the Art, when the time shall come; which shall be this: *viz.* I will some space before hand appoint a convenient place where all contributors shall receive a printed paper, at large describing both by words and figures, the fabrike, use and application of all and each part of the Instrument, and such as have paid for Instruments shall there receive them, and there will I also give a weeks constant attendance to resolve all difficulties arising to the lesse nimble apprehensions in the practice of the Art.

Now, as for security, that it shall be so discovered according to promise, I have taken care, That (in case of sudden death, or any like accident which may befall me) all impediments thereof may be removed, by depositing in the hands of trusty and able friends an Instrument exactly fitted, with a punctuall and clear description of the uses and applications thereof. Or if any very scrupulous person shall happen to dream of any ground of suspicion, why I should of purpose not discover it,

it, or can imagine, where and how I can protect my selfe from the discredit, the losse of all future fruits of my Priviledge, and the suits of every contributor against me (which must attend so unworthy a piece of folly) he shall have security for his five shillings in that behalfe.

As for the price of the Instruments (which men that desire to have them, are to deposite above the five shillings) it is two shillings six pence, namely, for those which I conceive to be of most generall and common use, which if I can between this and the time of discovery, better and improve, it shall be done at mine own charges, although they should grow dearer thereby, so as (if they become cheaper by my improvement) no man will think himselfe wronged if I make no retribution out of the said price.

As for the Instruments of multiple writing, I would not have them expected, because their use is not generally needfull, and incomparably more hard then of those for double onely: Wherefore I have thought it rather fit to reserve them for the peculiar use of some, who for want of better employment, may make a trade of that practice.

To conclude all, I shall be ashamed of my judgement rather then my honesty, if (at the worst) the discovery of a thing so rare, unheard of, thought by many at first hearing to be impossible, so necessary, and almost of hourly use to most men in the whole world, as well to those that live in this present age, as to those that shall ever live after us, with 14 years licence to reap the benefit of the same, be not well worth five shillings, In all which time if it may save the writing of ten sheets onely, the Contributors can be no losers by the bargain. For mine own part, I do not doubt but that thousands will receive in that time a thousand fold profit for their adventure, and have great cause to thank God that he hath given gifts unto men.

# Sexto Martii, 1647.

*An Ordinance of the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament, to enable the Commissioners of the Great Seal, to grant his Majesties Letters Patents to William Petty or to his Assignes, for his having and quiet enjoying the sole benefit of his late Invention of Double and Multiple Writing for the term of 14 yeares, according to the Proviso of the Statute of the 21 yeare of King J. A. M. E. S. in that behalf made.*

**T**H E Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament, having by severall Certificats from credible men received full satisfaction, not onely of the feasibility of a late invention of double and multiple writing, found out and discovered by the industry of William Petty, and by him made practicable by Instruments, and means of severall signatures and fashions, but also of the great use and profit which may redound to the Common-wealth, in generall, and especially to those who have much and frequent use of writing, and being desirous to encourage not only the pains and labour of William Petty, but also of all others that shall bend their thoughts to the search of such secrets as shall be profitable to the Common-wealth, doe Ordain, and doth hereby Order and Ordained, by the Lords and Commons in Parliament, that the said William Petty, shall have the sole benefit of his said inventions to him or his assignes. for and during the term of 14 yeares, either by teaching, or otherwise discovering the same, or by the sale of such Instruments as are usefull to the practice of the said Art: Prohibiting and strictly forbidding all or any person or persons whatsoever for and during the said terme, the sale or use of any of the said Instrument or Instruments, or practice of the said Art upon any other Instruments (It being an easie matter to adde unto, or otherwise to alter these, which are already contrived by the said William Petty) without the license of him the said Inventor, or his Assignes, upon the penalty of a hundred pound, to be forfeited to his or their use, so far as it will be very difficult to discover any such delinquents.

And it is further ordained, That Oliver Saint John Esquire, his Majesties Solicitor Generall do prepare a Bill to be signed by the Clerks of both Houses of Parliament, containing his Majesties Grant to William Petty, of the sole profit of the said Art accordingly.

And the Commissioners of the great Seal are hereby required upon delivery of the said Bill so prepared and signed by the Solicitor Generall, and Clerks of both Houses of Parliament into the Chancery, to make their Receiptments and to signe the same: to the end the said Bill may be forthwith engrossed under the great Seal. And this Ordinance or the Duplicate thereof shall be sufficient apparant, as well to the said Solicitor Generall and Clerks of both Houses of Parliament, as to the said Commissioners and every of them for the doing hereof, and passing the said grant under the said great Seal, and also to all and every Officer of the said great Seal.

John Brown Cler. Parliament. H. Elsyng Cler. Parl. Dom. Com.